Executive Proclamation
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, A strong country begins with strong communities in which all citizens play an active role and invest in the success and future of the youth of the United States; and,

Whereas, South Dakota teen courts exist to prevent youth from further involvement with the court system by providing an alternative option to formal court; and,

Whereas, Teen court programs rely on cooperation between law enforcement, court services, the state's attorney offices, mental health services, the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the school system for their success; and,

Whereas, Since the first South Dakota teen court began in 1995 in Lawrence County, covering the communities of Deadwood, Lead and Spearfish, teen courts have expanded to include the communities of Aberdeen, Hot Springs, Redfield, Rapid City, Pierre/Ft. Pierre and Sioux Falls; and,

Whereas, Nationwide, more than 110,000 youths volunteered to hear more than 115,000 juvenile cases, and more than 20,000 adults volunteered to facilitate peer justice in teen court programs; and,

Whereas, In 49 states and the District of Columbia, 1,158 youth court programs provide restorative justice for juvenile offenders, resulting in effective crime prevention, early intervention and education for all youth participants, and enhanced public safety throughout the United States; and,

Whereas, A fundamental correlation exists between youth service and the lifelong adult commitment to and involvement in one's community, and participation in teen court programs encourages youth court members to become valuable members of their communities; and,

Whereas, The South Dakota Teen Court Association and the National Association of Youth Courts have declared the month of September as Teen Court Month with this year's theme, "Empowering Youth, Experiencing Justice":

Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim September 2007 as

TEEN COURT MONTH

in South Dakota, and I call upon all citizens to find ways to give of their time, energy and talents to serve our state's and nation's teen courts.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Ninth Day of August in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven.

M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:

Chris Nelson, Secretary of State